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REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER

OF

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
Little Rock, Arkansas,
30th October, 1860.

To his Excellency ELIAS N. CONWAY,
Governor of the State of Arkansas:

SIR—As ex-officio commissioner of public buildings of the state, it is my duty to call your attention to the dilapidated and decaying condition of the state house.

It is evident that some immediate action should be taken of the matter by the legislature to have thoroughly repaired the main building and the west wing of the capitol to preserve them from further injury. The system of patch work that has been pursued in regard to it by every legislature that has assembled here since 1840; whenever an appropriation was made, it was wholly inadiquate to have the repairs necessary done in a style and finish to correspond with the work done on the building in the first place. Nothing short of a thorough and complete repairing of the center building and the west wing will be of any permanent service to the house or value to the state. I would suggest the propriety of removing the walls of the wood houses, between the main building and the wings, and have the roofs closed, and supported by columns; the space paved with brick to correspond with the pavements

on each side of these wood houses. This improvement would add considerably to the appearance of the buildings, while it would also afford more light to the rooms in the wings, and those in the main building at the north end of the house. It would also keep the walls dry and prevent the dampness that is now injuring the walls, particularly, of the main building. These wood houses are of no practicable use or value to the premises. The whole building needs repainting, and all the rooms should be plastered on the inside.

It is believed that a slight examination of its present condition will satisfy any one that a large amount of repairing must be done in the next two years, or the building will not be fit for the reception of another legislature.

I would respectfully call your special attention to the condition of the rooms in which the state library is kept. They are small and not well arranged to put books on shelves in the order they should be for convenience, or to preserve them.

The number of books now in the library is considerable, and rapidly increasing; and their weight on the second story is too great for security, without very thorough repairs on the west wing of the building. There are a number of books now on hand, that cannot be put in the library for the want of more room and thorough repairs. A number of volumes of the reports of the decisions of the supreme court of this state, for the want of room for them in the library, have been stored away in one of the committee rooms until recently, when they were removed from it to the room containing the geological specimens of the state, as the only place they could be put about the building to be preserved. These reports are in a very damaged state, and the binding will have to be made new in many instances, to put them in a condition to be preserved and kept from ruin and total loss. The library rooms should be repaired, or a building should be erected for its use.

The furniture in the Senate chamber and in the House of Representatives has been in use for about twenty-two years, and is now much worn and so defaced that it cannot be patched up any longer. Provision should be made for the purchase of new furuiture and the fitting up of both rooms before the assembling of another legislature of the state.

It is not in my power at present to furnish your excellency with an estimate of the cost of the necessary repairs that ought to be made and to purchase new furniture for the Senate chamber and House of Representatives; but believe it would not fall short of $15,000 or $20,000.

I am, very respectfully, your ob't serv't,

S. M. WEAVER, *Secretary of State and Ex-officio Commissioner of Public Buildings.*